

New Case Managers Join ASCC

Susan Kirkwold and Kim Brown are new Case Managers

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission (ASCC) welcomed two new Case Managers in February. Both are proving to be enthusiastic and skilled service providers.

Susan (Susie) Kirkwold has joined the ASCC Little Rock Case Management staff, replacing Terra Patrom. Susan holds a Master's degree in Counseling from Henderson State University. A native of Hot Springs, she has spent the past five years working in mental health and with disadvantaged students in Tulsa, OK. She is very

excited about returning to Arkansas.

Susan is providing case management services to persons in Lonoke and White Counties and in part of Pulaski County. She is looking forward to meeting all the individuals on her caseload.

When asked about what activities she enjoys in her free time Susan said, "Well, I'm still new to the Little Rock area, but I like it here.

I do enjoy reading and writing. Also, I have a dog named Huck—he's a terrier mix."

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ASCC welcomes Kim Brown (left) and Susan Kirkwold (right) to the Case Management staff.

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Time to Sign Up for Camp!

Spina Bifida Camp is June 22 – 27, 2003

Spring has arrived, and it is time to get ready for our annual Spina Bifida Camp. Each year the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission, in cooperation with MedCamps of Arkansas and Camp Aldersgate, sponsors a weeklong camp session for children ages 6 to 16 at Camp Aldersgate. This year's camp will be held from June 22 through June 27.

There is no charge to the family for this week of camp. However, families are responsible for transporting their children to and from Camp Aldersgate.

For those of you unfamiliar with camp, Camp Aldersgate is located

in a quiet, rustic area in West Little Rock near Baptist Health Medical Center. Traditional camping activities such as nature hikes, outdoor cooking, arts and crafts, swimming, fishing, drama and music are featured. Other activities include an accessible adventure/challenge ropes course, hand and/or foot driven catamarans, adapted archery and—for older campers—scuba diving.

All of the cabins, dining hall, health care center and activity buildings are air-conditioned and fully accessible. In addition, from the time camp starts on Sunday

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SPINAL COURIER

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Visit our website at:
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With Thanks

Donations this quarter from:

Jimmy Ashley
Clifton Coates

Judi and Rick Layton
Georgia Stanfield
Jim and Jack Turner

In Memory of Chris Brown:

Jennifer and Bruce Brown
In Memory of Rich Land:

Donnalee and Eddie Nichols

ASCC accepts tax-deductible donations. The generosity of the many individuals and families, who over the years have made memorial donations, is greatly appreciated. Contributions are used to assist our clients through purchases of equipment and educational resources.

If you would like to make a contribution, please contact the Commission at **501-296-1788 / 800-459-1517** (voice) / **501-296-1794** (TDD), or send your donation to:

AR Spinal Cord Commission
1501 N. University, Suite 470
Little Rock, AR 72207

SPINAL COURIER Letters

Questions • Suggestions • Directions • Answers

TV Advertisements

Dear Editor:

We frequently see these advertisements on television stating, "You may be eligible for a free power wheelchair!" You are instructed to call a phone number and they supposedly see if you would be eligible through Medicare. Some even say they will write-off the deductible if you are eligible.

I'm wondering if any *Spinal Courier* readers have gotten a power wheelchair this way. Also, would these clients be willing to provide

feedback on their satisfaction with both the product and the service after the sale?

Personally, I would like to know the answers for myself. But what is more important, this feedback may benefit other clients who are considering this form of an "easy and painless" purchase and help them to make more informed decisions in the future.

Robert W. Griffin
ASCC Case Manager
Russellville, AR

From the Director

"Success is a journey, not a destination," according to Winston Churchill. Perhaps that's why we often don't count a person's successes until they have finished their life's journey. Certainly, all of us find successes along life's path. But too often, we are looking for something bigger and better, and forget to give credit where it is due. In times like these, when most of what we see and read is about what's negative in the world, it is important for us to count our successes! We can't let all the concerns of the world cloud or obscure our everyday successes and achievements.

The economy, state budget cuts, fears of war, changes in the way we get and provide services are all weighing heavily on us this spring. Over the next few months and years, we are all going to be called to pitch in, tighten our belts and make do. We're going to be making changes, possibly finding ourselves on new journeys—finding new ways to be successful. Will it be easy? Not likely! Will it be fun? If we allow it to be! The challenge will be to **find and enjoy our successes while we are moving along**, not wait till we reach that final destination!

So take time to stop and smell the flowers this spring. And while you are at it, take time to count all the successes in your life and those around you. You'll be surprised!

Cheryl L. Vines

Who Can You Trust?

By Marty Ball

Recently, the theme of wheelchair selection has been running through some of my articles. By the flavor of the comments I've received, there are more questions than answers about choosing the "right" wheelchair, so I thought I would try to point out various options. Who are the people who might help in the process?

Doctors

It is my experience that few doctors really know wheelchairs. They usually turn the specifics of the selection process over to therapists, as physicians are generally too busy to keep up on the changing styles and types of wheelchairs. I usually see prescriptions from doctors as "Rx—one wheelchair."

Therapists

A therapist is another member of the medical team, and some actually specialize in equipment and seating clients who will use such equipment on a daily basis. But not all are knowledgeable enough to make informed recommendations. The good thing about them is, if they are not familiar with equipment, they will suggest someone with more knowledge than they have.

Therapists who have decided to work with seating and positioning wheelchair users are usually very good. And sometimes people in chairs can teach them a little about the practical issues surrounding wheelchair use within the community. I believe this is a good idea.

Therapists' main concern is medical, so many times other members of the seating team address practical issues. Occupational therapists generally consider clients' home and work environments and suggest necessary changes.

Many of the country's major rehab

centers have clinics specializing in wheelchair users' equipment needs. These facilities generally have a good working relationship with manufacturers of such equipment and are able to consider their clients' special needs.

Today, custom wheelchairs are much more the norm than ever before, and the responsibility to fit them properly rests on the therapist and equipment vendor or dealer, along with the input of the users.

Don't Buy Before You Try

Dealers (Vendors)

Unless an insurance company specifies a dealer, you can choose which one you want to work with. Manufacturers usually build relationships with knowledgeable, credentialed rehab dealers, so when a custom performance wheelchair is prescribed the dealer representative will know how best to help the therapist.

Whenever insurance providers assist with chair purchase, a therapist or doctor must complete the prescription and specification sheet for the vendor. Dealers then bill insurance and order the wheelchair. If no reimbursement is involved, you can go directly to the dealer and buy the wheelchair yourself. Be careful, though: "specials" or manufacturer discounts can influence the dealer. Always try to get the chair you choose, not one that someone is trying to talk you into buying.

Some dealers have samples of wheelchairs you can try. If you don't see what you want to test, ask the vendor to contact the manufacturer and have the company rep bring a demo chair for you.

"Don't buy before you try" is a good phrase to remember.

Other Wheelchair Users

One of the best ways to make a final check of your chair-buying decision is to talk with other wheelchair users. Once in a while we miss an important feature or pitfall when choosing a new wheelchair, and an experienced user can remind us of a multitude of practical issues. But be sure to do this *before* the therapist finalizes your prescription. Nothing will upset him or her more than having to cancel or redo a prescription. Therapists are a busy group and must write and justify every component of a new chair. Give them a break when accumulating information and do your research *before* the final decision is made.

As you can imagine, there are many issues to contend with when choosing your new wheelchair, not the least of which are the practical ones. I've been asked many times what I think is the most important issue when making a selection. In my humble opinion, it is *lifestyle*.

Remember, the chair you pick today will accompany you everywhere for many years. You must feel entirely comfortable with your choice in everything you do. Many of us still don't have the luxury of having two or more chairs for all the different activities in which we participate. *The most important chair is the one you use for your daily activities.*

Marty Ball is a member of the Wheelchair Sports Hall of Fame, holding multiple world records in track and road racing. Currently vice president of sales at TISport LLC, he has worked in the wheelchair industry for 22 years.
518-398-7655 / Mball@tilite.com

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Blood Derived Wound Healing

By Jay D. Holland, M.D., Hillcrest Family Clinic, Little Rock, AR

A new kind of wound treatment is available for chronic decubitus ulcerations [pressure sores], diabetic foot ulcers and wound dehiscence [a splitting open or a rupture of a wound]. It is a **tissue graft derived from the patient's own blood, which stimulates the growth of new tissue in the wound.**

Until recently, the standard for chronic wounds was the wet to dry dressing that came into common use during the Civil War. Recent scientific advances have shown that **wounds heal from the inside out**, not from the edges, and the tissue that fills the wound is derived from cells that are circulating in the blood.

So, what we have done is to derive out those healing cells from the blood, concentrate them into a gel and place them into a wound that has been prepared for receipt of this graft. We seal this up so that it can adhere and it stimulates the growth of new flesh. This flesh is muscle, tendon, fascia, blood vessels and connective tissue that need to be there. It fills the defects in the flesh with the right tissue. Then the skin grows over this tissue with a good blood supply.

The process requires between 60 cc. (2 oz.) and 400 cc. (about 13 oz.) of whole blood from the patient. In some cases where the patient is weak, the red blood cells are returned to the patient. The plasma and red blood cells are removed, leaving a platelet rich plasma that contains white blood cells, lymphocytes, proteins and bone marrow derived stem cells. This concentrate is caused to gel and creates a malleable graft that is then placed into the wound site.

We are having good success with diabetic foot ulcers and pressure

sores of all kinds. We have used this with good results on burns and surgical wounds.

Dr. Cal Britton, DPM, Dr. Alex Dillinger and I have innovated this therapy and perfected techniques, working with the people at Safeblood® Technologies, Inc. of Little Rock, to make this treatment available.

We are having good success with diabetic foot ulcers and pressure sores of all kinds.

The healing rates with this therapy have been rapid, since it is a concentrate of what the wound needs anyway. We have:

- Healed sacral wounds 4 cm. [1 5/8 in.] by 3 cm. [1 1/4 in.] and over 1 cm. [1/2 in.] deep in seven weeks.
- Grown new tissue into the wound left by a flesh eating bacteria.
- Healed diabetic foot ulcers that have been present for years.
- Healed ischial ulcerations that

have not improved with any other method of treatment.

- Shown improvement above that achieved with hyperbaric treatment, wound clinic care, wound-vac therapy and Oasis Grafts.

The cost is also in line with or less than most therapies. And, the wound care is essentially nothing more than maintaining a sealer dressing over the wound. The physician checks the wound weekly and repeats the graft whenever healing has slowed. **Wounds take from one to four treatments over the healing time, usually 6-14 weeks, depending on the size and location the wound.** Treatments are done as a surgical procedure in the operating room or the office. Dressing changes can be done in the office.

As in all other therapies for chronic wounds, off-loading and protection of the wound site are necessary for healing to occur. Long-term prevention is also dependent on good fitting shoes, braces and cushions.

Soon, you may know someone who is the recipient of this new Blood Derived Wound Healing therapy.

Spina Bifida Camp 2003

Continued from page 1

afternoon until camp ends on Friday morning, trained counselors, volunteers and MedCamps medical specialists supervise the campers.

This really is a time of growth and learning for all of the campers while they spend a week full of fun-filled activities. Applications and brochures were sent out in March. We only have room for 45

campers, and acceptance will be based on a first-come, first-served basis—so be sure to send yours in as soon as possible!

If you have questions regarding camp, you can call Mary Jo Stanton at **501-296-1788** or **800-459-1517** or by email at mjstanton@arspinalcord.com.



Support Groups Available for You

Do something for YOU — check out a local group!

Support groups provide a variety of functions. They were born out of the self-help movement that has the premise that help (or support) can best be provided by other individuals with similar types of experiences.

The basic premise of a support group is that no one likes to be alone. Human beings are social creatures. We crave the company of others. We talk about independence as a goal for individuals. However, true independence is a sense of personal fortitude combined with the interdependence of others. We are connected and interact with so many other individuals. Our family and friends, caregivers, coworkers, the newspaper delivery person—all link us to our world.

A support group allows the opportunity for individuals with common sense and common goals to explore and share their ideas and abilities. Attending a support group opens you up to others, in what can be called a N.E.W. experience. The support group **Needs** you to attend. The support group **Expects** you to attend. The support group **Wants** you to attend.

In Central Arkansas there are three ongoing support groups for individuals with an interest in spinal cord disability (SCD). The **White County SCI Support Group** has been meeting now for over ten years. The **11:00 a.m.** monthly meeting takes place on the **first Tuesday of each month** at the White County Hospital. This meeting is open to individuals with SCD. This group hosts an annual fish fry picnic and has a variety of activities throughout the year. The contact person is Larry Wilson at **501-724-3504**.

Another monthly support group takes place the **third Thursday of**

each month at St. Vincent Hospital in Sherwood. Lunch is served beginning at **11:30 a.m.** Information is presented by a guest speaker beginning around noon. This meeting is open to anyone with an interest in SCD. A mix of individuals with SCD, their family members and individuals working in the field of SCD attend this meeting. Guest speakers have covered such topics as pressure mapping and cushions, wheelchairs, hunting, personal perspectives of abilities, scuba diving and travel. **Contact Judith at 501-683-1124 / 800-459-1517** to find out about the next topic and to reserve a lunch for yourself and your guests.

A quarterly support group meeting takes place at **Baptist Rehabilitation Hospital** with the next meeting scheduled for **early May**. The meetings have featured speakers discussing medical aspect topics related to SCD. Lunch is served beginning at **11:30 a.m.** with the presentation beginning around noon. This meeting is open to anyone with an interest in SCD. Once again, contact Judith to find out about the next topic and to reserve a lunch for yourself and your guests.

The choice is yours. Attending a support group is something **NEW** you can do for **YOU!**

Jonesboro FOE Chapter Donates \$5,000 for ASCC Educational Programs

ASCC Chairperson Joe McNiel (right) accepts a donation from Jimmy Ashley (left), Commission Member and Fraternal Order of Eagles member, on behalf of the Jonesboro Chapter of the Fraternal Order of Eagles (FOE).



The \$5,000 grant was the first one awarded by the Eagles through the newly established Lewis Reed Spinal Cord Injury Fund, with matching funds raised by the Jonesboro club for the Commission.

The grant funds will be used for educational programs, including purchasing resources given to all new referrals to the Commission, for the McCluer Resource Center and regional resource libraries, as well as for supporting educational conferences and workshops.

Commission members and staff extend our sincere thanks to the Fraternal Order of Eagles for their generosity and support.

Nutrition and Exercise Courses to be Offered

For a healthier you — attend one of these two fun-filled workshops

Beginning in May 2003, ASCC will offer two short courses to help you get started on your way to healthier eating and increasing your exercise routine. The first course will deal with nutrition and the important role it plays in maintaining the health of persons with disabilities. The second course will be all about exercising and how it is a vital activity for persons with disabilities.

Both courses will begin with some classroom type lectures, but much of the time will be spent in hands-on activities. Participants in both groups will set their own personal goals. In the nutrition course activities will include fun things such as preparing foods, trying different cooking methods and tasting foods. In the exercise course you will participate in activities such as learning exercise routines while seated

in your wheelchair, developing your exercise routine and trying out different exercise equipment.

Each course will be limited to the first 50 adults (ages 18 and over). Applications will be mailed to all eligible persons residing in the following counties: Faulkner, Garland, Grant, Jefferson, Lonoke, Pulaski, Saline and White. Look for your application in early April!

AILC Spirit Awards

ASCC Case Manager Kay Lynn (right) of Ft. Smith, AR Rehabilitation Services Counselor Cornelius Hollingshead (top center) of Hot Springs and ASCC Case Manager Robert Griffin (left) of Russellville were honored with Spirit Awards by Arkansas Independent Living Council (AILC) Chairperson Sydney Case (bottom center) at an AILC luncheon at the Governor's Mansion on March 6, 2003. In presenting the awards, Ms. Case noted, "These three counselors have shown spirit and caring well beyond the respon-



sibilities of their day-to-day jobs in providing services to Arkansas citizens with disabilities."

New ASCC Staff

Continued from page 1

Kim Brown also joined the ASCC staff in February, replacing Bettie Tapp who retired in December after working in the Hot Springs office since 1988. She is providing services to individuals in Garland and Montgomery Counties and parts of Saline County.

Kim holds two Master's degrees, including one in social work from the University of Texas. Also, she is a Licensed Social Worker and a

Certified Case Manager. Fortunately for the individuals on her caseload, Kim has extensive experience working with spinal cord disabilities over the past fifteen years. Kim related, "For the past three years I ran my own case management company in the Hot Springs area and am very familiar with local resources."

Kim and her husband, Gordon, live in Hot Springs Village, along with

The Energy Crisis

The body's energy is often used in unproductive pursuit of the following ACTIVITIES:

1. Jumping to conclusions
2. Pushing your luck
3. Beating you head against the wall
4. Making mountains out of molehills
5. Fishing for compliments
6. Dragging your heels
7. Adding fuel to the fire
8. Throwing your weight around
9. Running down your boss
10. Dodging responsibility

Written by Cynthia Yarberry. Reprinted with permission from California Paralyzed Veterans Association News Bulletin, December 2002.



their basset hound, Dugan. In her free time she keeps busy playing golf, cooking, reading and watching old movies.

The Commission members and staff feel very fortunate to have such qualified individuals joining our agency. Welcome aboard, Susan and Kim!

Upcoming ADSA Events

Enjoy Arkansas' great outdoors!

The Arkansas Disabled Sportsman Association (ADSA) promotes outdoor recreational activities and education for Arkansans with disabilities. Several of the upcoming 2003 events sponsored by ADSA include:

- Fish Fry and Camping at Greers Ferry Lake
Saturday, May 17, 2003
- Bow Shoot
Saturday, June 28, 2003
- ATV Ride
Date to be announced

You are encouraged to call ahead of time to get details about these ADSA events. Please contact Jimmy Ashley at **870-935-6875** or **870-919-5590**.

Fishin' at The Harbor

Fishin' at The Harbor is a day of fishing for children with physical disabilities and their families Saturday, **April 26, 2003, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm** at Mountain Harbor Resort on Lake Ouachita in Hot Springs. The event is sponsored by Horton's Orthotic Lab, Inc., in cooperation with Mountain Harbor Resort, First National Bank of Hot Springs and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Subway Sandwiches will provide lunch.



There is no charge for attending, but you must **register by Wednesday, April 23**. For more information and to make reservations, call Tonya Horton at **501-663-2908 / 800-331-2908** or e-mail her at **thorton@hortonsoandp.com**.

ASCC Updates E-mail Service

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission has recently updated its e-mail system to a domain name that includes all ASCC employees throughout the state. The new domain name is "arspinalcord.org". Below is a list of all ASCC employees and their new e-mail addresses. Contact us!

Little Rock Administrative Office

Diana Hoke	dhoke@arspinalcord.org
Cindy Krebs	ckrebs@arspinalcord.org
Patti Rogers	progers@arspinalcord.org
Mary Jo Stanton	mjstanton@arspinalcord.org
Cheryl Vines	cvines@arspinalcord.org
New Referrals	referral@arspinalcord.org

Little Rock Research Office

Tom Farley	tfarley@arspinalcord.org
Dee Ledbetter	dledbetter@arspinalcord.org
Newsletter	courier@arspinalcord.org

Case Management Offices

Batesville – David Hill	dhill@arspinalcord.org
Fayetteville – Adela Martinez	amartinez@arspinalcord.org
Fort Smith – Kay Lynn	klynn@arspinalcord.org
Hot Springs – Kim Brown	kbrown@arspinalcord.org
Jonesboro – Rose Mary Agee	rmagee@arspinalcord.org
Jonesboro – Russell Henry	rhenry@arspinalcord.org
Little Rock - Judith Akridge	jakridge@arspinalcord.org
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Magnolia – Janet White	jwhite@arspinalcord.org
Pine Bluff – Bobby Johnson	bjohnson@arspinalcord.org
Russellville – Robert Griffin	rgriffin@arspinalcord.org
West Memphis – Sharon McCoy	smccoy@arspinalcord.org

Take Control, Volume 4

It's here! *Take Control, Volume 4* is available. It includes the topics:

- Self-care
- Wheelchairs
- Wheelchair Maintenance

This CD-ROM is a fun and entertaining look at a usually uninteresting subject. *Take Control, Volume 4* contains one-and-a-half hours of instructional video segments, over 20 interactive learning games, printable documents, links to over 90 websites and a multimedia glossary on spinal cord disability terms.

As you may recall, *Take Control* is a series of CD-ROM's designed

to help people learn more about spinal cord disability (SCD) and the skills it takes to live healthily. *Take Control* is a self-paced, interactive program that can be used on either a PC or MAC. Topics discussed in *Take Control*, volumes 1-3 include:

- Introduction to SCD
- Spinal Cord Anatomy and Physiology
- Skin Care
- Range of Motion
- Nerves, Muscles and Bones
- Sports and Recreation
- The ADA and Your Rights

- Bladder Management
- Bowel Management
- Nutrition
- Autonomic Dysreflexia
- Computer Tools

Contact ASCC's McCluer Resource Center at **501-296-1792** or **800-459-1517** or by e-mail at jakridge@arspinalcord.org to order your copy of *Take Control, Volume 4* or the entire set. Each volume is priced at \$45 or you can order the set of all four volumes for \$99. You can also check out the CD-ROM's from the McCluer Resource Center for a period of two weeks.

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